

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated December 17, 2008. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. All rejections and objections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 – 14, 29, and 36 – 43 are now pending in this application.

Claims 1, 29, and 36 have been amended and are fully supported by the Applicant's Specification at page 4 line 27 – page 5 line 3 and at Fig. 1, among other places.

Claim 43 has been added.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

At pages 2 – 6 of the Office Action, claims 1 – 7, 12, 29, 36, 38, and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Slobodin et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0072429 (hereinafter “Slobodin”), in view of Rodman et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0103864 (hereinafter “Rodman”), in further view of Watanabe et al., U.S. Patent No. 7,234,116 (hereinafter “Watanabe”).

The Applicant's claim 1, representative in part of the other rejected claims, sets forth (emphasis added):

1. (Currently Amended) A method for initiating an online meeting over a data network between a host party with a first computer and an attendee party with a second computer, where a phone connection exists over a telephone network between a first phone of the host party and a second phone of the attendee party, the method comprising:
 - receiving a start meeting command at ***a first adaptor coupled in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone***, the first adaptor also coupled to the first computer;
 - in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center;***
 - receiving a meeting identification from the data center;
 - storing the meeting identification in the first adaptor;
 - transmitting the meeting identification from the first adaptor over the telephone network to a second adaptor, which is coupled to both the second phone and the second computer.

Slobodin discloses a “dataconferencing appliance [that] is connected to a data network that links the sites independently of the voice call network.” *See* Slobodin, abstract. To establish a data communication session between local and remote sites, a user activates a conferencing appliance which uses its internal telephone adaptor 140 to begin an access negotiation procedure. *See* Slobodin, paragraph 0051. As part of the access negotiation procedure, a “network device access code is communicated by generating an audio signal representative of the network device access code and transmitting it within the voice call session. In response to receipt of the audio signal at the second site, the access negotiation procedure of the dataconference control unit at the second site uses its network interface module and the received network device access code to join a data communication session between the sites via the data network...” *See* Slobodin, paragraph 0011. Figures 1, and 3 – 12 of Slobodin shows the connectivity between the dataconference appliances and the speakerphones.

Rodman discloses a technique for initiating and conducting a data conference between a plurality of conference endpoints linked in communication by a network. *See* Rodman, Abstract. “To initiate a data conference, one of the participating conference endpoints sends a conference initiation request over the network to a conference server...Upon receipt of the conference initiation request, the conference server generates a conference code that uniquely identifies the data conference. The conference code is transmitted over the network to the requesting conference endpoint.” *See* Rodman, paragraph 0012. Figure 1 of Rodman shows the connectivity between the conference endpoints and the network.

Watanabe discloses a communication system that transmits an animated character and its action from a transmitting side to a receiving side. *See* Watanabe, column 2, lines 37 – 40. The designated character performs the designated action on the screen of the receiving side. *See* Watanabe, column 2, lines 40 – 41. Further, “there is provided a communications system comprising a plurality of user terminals capable of communication using a predetermine communication software program and accessible to Internet...” *See* Watanabe, column 4, line 65 – column 5, line 2. Figure 7 discloses a flowchart of a procedure for starting up the communication software on a particular

terminal. Specifically, a start-up message is transmitted from the user terminal to the administrator server. Figure 1 of Watanabe shows the connectivity between the terminals and the internet/network.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Slobodin, Rodman, and Watanabe does not teach or suggest the Applicant's claimed "...*a first adaptor coupled in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone...*" and "*in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center.*"

While the Applicant claims to couple an adaptor between a base and a handset of a phone, Slobodin, Rodman, and Watanabe are completely silent with respect to this feature.

Further, while the Applicant claims that an adaptor, that receives a start meeting message, and then *causes* a computer to send a start meeting message over a data network, Slobodin, Rodman and Watanabe are silent with respect to receiving a command at a first entity (e.g., an adaptor) which causes a second entity (e.g., a computer) to send a message.

I. The Cited References Fail to Couple an Adaptor Between a Phone Base and a Phone Handset.

In the Applicant's technique, the adaptor 104 is coupled in between the phone base 102 and the phone handset, as shown below (Figure 1 of the Applicant's Specification). Advantageously, such coupling may allow the Applicant's adaptor to operate with both analog and digital phones, absent complicated circuitry to support both types of phone technology.

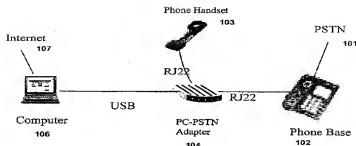


FIG. 1

In contrast to the Applicant's claim, Slobodin is **silent** with respect to coupling an adaptor in between a phone base and a phone handset of a phone. Specifically, in describing Figure 3, Slobodin states, "[w]ith reference to Fig. 3, a dataconferencing system...includes at a local site 302 a local projector 308 (or other display device), a local speakerphone 312, and an image source 316, all connected to a simplified local dataconference appliance 322." *See* Slobodin, paragraph [0062]. Thus, Slobodin merely discloses that dataconference appliances 368 and 322 are connected to speakerphones 362 and 312, as shown below (Figure 3 of Slobodin). Slobodin **says nothing** of placing the dataconference appliance in between a phone base and a phone handset.

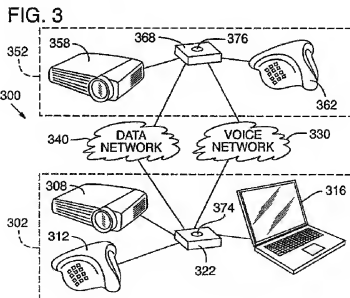


FIG. 3

The differing structures of Slobodin are further observed in Figures 1, and 4-12 of Slobodin that show a connection between the dataconference appliance and the

speakerphone, wherein the speakerphone is always shown as one whole unit (e.g., elements 110 and 120 of Figure 1; elements 362 and 312 of Figure 3, elements 448 and 456 of Figure 4). Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that Slobodin is silent with respect to the Applicant's claim that couples the first adaptor *in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone*.

Further, the Applicant respectfully submits Rodman is also silent with respect to the Applicant's claim as highlighted above, and instead simply discloses a conference endpoint that is connected to a network. Specifically, a conference endpoint as defined by Rodman is an audio or video conferencing device. *See* Rodman, paragraph [0005]. The configuration of the operating environment in Rodman can be best understood by observing Figure 1 of Rodman. "The operating environment 100 includes a local conference endpoint 104 and a plurality of remote conference endpoints (collectively denoted as 110) coupled to a computer network." *See* Rodman, paragraph [0023]. Thus, as shown below (Figure 1 of Rodman), Rodman merely discloses that the conference endpoints 105 and 110 are connected to the network 120.

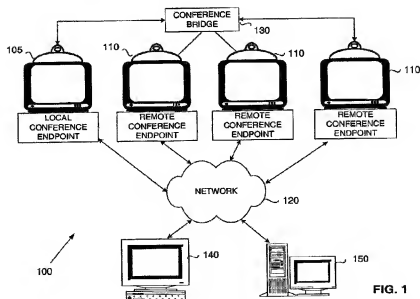


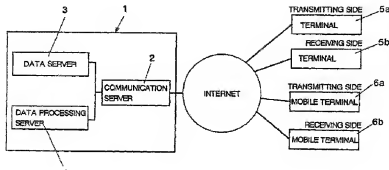
FIG. 1

Rodman says nothing of coupling an adaptor *in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone*, as is claimed by the Applicant.

Moreover, the Applicant respectfully submits that Watanabe is also silent with

respect to the Applicant's claim as highlighted above. Specifically, as show in Figure 1 of Watanabe, Watanabe merely discloses terminals 5a, 5b, 6a, and 6b that are connected to the internet.

Fig.1



Watanabe is completely silent with respect to coupling an adaptor *in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone*, as is claimed by the Applicant.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that a combination of Slobodin, Rodman, and Watanabe does not teach or suggest the Applicant's claimed "...*a first adaptor coupled in between a phone base and a phone handset of the first phone...*".

II. The Cited References Fail to Receive a Start Meeting Command at a First Entity, an Adaptor, that Causes a Second Entity, a Computer, to Send a Start Meeting Message Over a Data Network.

In the Applicant's technique, a first adaptor is coupled to a first computer. When the first adaptor receives a start meeting command, the first adaptor *causes* (e.g., triggers) the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center. Said differently, there is a causal link in the Applicant's technique where a start meeting command is received at a first entity, an adaptor, which then *causes* a completely different entity, a computer (coupled to the adaptor), to send a start meeting message to a data center.

In contrast to the Applicant's claim "*in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start*

meeting message over the data network to a data center”, Slobodin merely discloses a technique where a dataconference appliance receives input to start a data conference and then that same dataconference appliance begins a negotiation procedure over a voice network to start the data conference. *See* Slobodin paragraph [0051]. Thus, it is **one entity** in Slobodin that receives the input and then begins the negotiation procedure over the voice network. Therefore, the causal link between the adaptor and computer as is claimed by the Applicant, where the adaptor that receives the start meeting command causes the computer to send a start meeting message, is **not** present within the Slobodin reference.

In contrast to the Applicant’s claim *“in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center”*, the local conference endpoint in Rodman does not cause a different entity/device to send a start meeting message over a data network. Instead, Rodman discloses a system where one unit, the conference endpoint, performs all the operations necessary to initiate a data conference. *See* Rodman, paragraph [0012] and Figure 1. That is, the conference endpoint is the entity that receives the initiation request (by depressing a single key) and is also the same entity that sends any requests to a conference server. *See* Rodman, paragraph [0012] and Fig. 2. As such, the causal link between the adaptor and the computer as is claimed by the Applicant, where the adaptor that receives the start meeting command causes the computer to send a start meeting message, is **not** present within the Rodman reference.

Moreover, the Applicant respectfully submits that Watanabe also **fails** to disclose receiving a start meeting command at one entity, an adaptor, which in turn causes a second entity, a computer, to send a start meeting message over the data network. The Examiner suggests that Watanabe teaches Applicant’s claimed *“in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center”* at Figure 7 and at column 12, line 61 – column 13, line 40 of Watanabe. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Specifically, this portion of Watanabe discloses the manner in which the communication software is started, and states that “a start-up

message is transmitted from the user terminal 5 or 6 to the administrator server 1.” See Watanabe, col. 13, lines 1 – 2 and Figure 1. “Upon receipt of the start-up message from the user terminal 5 or 6, the administrator server 1 accesses the ‘user information database’ and change the use status to ‘OnNet’.” See Watanabe, col. 13, lines 16 – 19. Thus, it is **one entity**, terminal 5 or 6 of Watanabe, that performs the process of starting up the communication software. Said differently, the causal link between the adaptor and the computer as is claimed by the Applicant, where the adaptor that receives the start meeting command causes the computer to send a start meeting message over a data network, is **not** present within the Rodman reference.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that a combination of Slobodin, Rodman, and Watanabe does not teach or suggest the Applicant’s claimed *“in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center.”*

At pages 6 – 8 of the Office Action, claims 8 – 11, 13 – 14, 39, and 41 – 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Slobodin in view of Rodman, in further view of Watanabe, in further view of Lee et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,959,072 (hereinafter “Lee”).

Claims 8 – 11, 13 – 14, 39, and 41 – 42 are dependent claims that depend from independent claims believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, claims 8 – 11, 13 – 14, 39, and 41 – 42 are believed to be in condition for allowance, due to their dependency as well as for other separate reasons.

At page 8 of the Office Action, claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Slobodin in view of Rodman, in further view of Watanabe, in further view of Office Notice.

Claim 37 is a dependent claim that depends from an independent claims believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, claim 37 is believed to be in condition for allowance, due to its dependency as well as for other separate reasons.

Should the Examiner believe a telephonic interview would be helpful in the disposition of this Application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at (617) 951-2500.

In summary, all independent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance and therefore all dependent claims that depend there from are believed to be in condition for allowance. The Applicant respectfully requests favorable action.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account
No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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